

**REMARKS**

**Summary of the Office Action**

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,525,960 to Yoshida et al. ("Yoshida").

**Summary of the Response to the Office Action**

Applicant respectfully submits pending claims 1-6 to the Examiner for reconsideration in view of the following remarks.

**All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter**

The non-final Office Action dated March 28, 2003, has been reviewed and the comments of the U.S. Patent Office have been considered. Accordingly, claims 1-6 are pending and respectfully submitted for reconsideration by the Examiner.

Claims 1-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Yoshida. *MPEP* § 2131 (p. 2100-69, 8th ed., Aug. 2001) states that a claim is anticipated only if each and every feature as set forth in the claims is found in a single reference. Applicant traverses this rejection because Yoshida fails to teach or suggest features of the claimed invention as a whole.

Independent claim 1 recites a combination of features including "a second level program step of after a first program voltage is applied to word lines, turning off said sensing circuit to maintain the threshold voltage at a first level voltage if the data stored at said register is a first

memory cell being a first data, and performing a program to raise the threshold voltage to a second level if the data stored at said register is the remaining memory cells being not the first data.”

By contrast, Yoshida states at col. 8, lines 5-14, that in the control sequence, first, each word line selected by decoding the write address is set at a potential of  $-11\text{V}$ , the data is then set at a voltage to read the data for verification. Then after a verification judgment is performed where all the data in sense latch array 11 have become zero, data held in data latch array 12a is then transferred to the sense latch array 11. Yoshida then states that the word line is set at a potential of  $-10.5\text{V}$ , and the data is again read for verification. This process is repeated so that the voltages of the write word line are gradually decreased (i.e.  $-11\text{V}$ ,  $-10.5\text{V}$ , and  $-10\text{V}$ ), to minimize word line disturbances (Yoshida at col. 8, lines 53-66). Therefore, Yoshida teaches a system that provides a word line voltage potential that depends on the latch array from which the data is written, rather than the content of data.

Moreover, Yoshida states at col. 8, lines 12-14 that data lines having a value of “1” are set at a potential, depending on the word line voltage, and are read for verification. After writing data held in a given array, a verification judgment is performed to determine whether the value of the data has become “0.” After which, the write operation will proceed to the data in the next data latch array 12a, 12b (Yoshida at col. 8, lines 23-26, 38-41). Thus, the sense latch array 11 does not turn off. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Yoshida fails to teach or suggest features of the claimed invention as a whole as recited in independent claim 1. Therefore, Applicant

respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Further claims 2-5, which depend from allowable claim 1, are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1, as well as for reciting additional features. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-6 are in condition for allowance.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and reexamination of this Application and the prompt allowance of pending claims 1-6. Applicant invites the Examiner to contact Applicant's undersigned representative if there are any issues that can be resolved via telephone conference.


**EXCEPT** for issue fees payable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.18, the Commissioner is hereby authorized by this paper to charge any additional fees during the entire pendency of this application including fees due under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 which may be required, including any required extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0310.

Respectfully submitted,

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